

Landslide survivor
shares her story

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Assembly sets tidelands
price for Wikan Enterprises

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petersburg pilot

PETERSBURG, ALASKA

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Petersburg adds its help to Wrangell recovery efforts

By OLIVIA ROSE
Pilot writer and
MARK C. ROBINSON
Wrangell Sentinel reporter

Following the devastating landslide that happened in Wrangell the night of Nov. 20, volunteers throughout Southeast have organized several ways to support the town of 2 thousand. Volunteers in Petersburg organized a relief effort in less than 24 hours and shipped donated supplies to the neighboring community.

In Wrangell, a crowd of volunteers —including Parks and Recreation Director Lucy Moline-Robinson, Chris and Dixie Booker from C&D Deliveries and fourth-grade teacher Brian Merritt— gathered at the Reliance Dock on Nov. 22 to offload donated relief supplies delivered from Petersburg by Breakaway Adventures.

The dozens of plastic totes

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Photo courtesy of Katie Holmlund

Petersburg volunteers work together to move supplies from the UHaul loaded with gathered donations including clothing, food, water, dog food, and more down the Banana Point boat ramp to the Breakaway water taxi ready to rush the goods to Wrangell.

State releases names of landslide dead and missing

By LARRY PERSILY
Wrangell Sentinel writer

WRANGELL — State officials have released the names of the four people killed and two others still missing from the Nov. 20 landslide that hit just past 11-Mile Zimovia Highway.

As of Monday, Nov. 27, searchers had found the bodies of Timothy Heller, 44, his wife, Beth Heller, 36, and their

daughters, Mara, 16, and Kara, 11.

Mara was a high school junior and Kara was in fifth grade.

Searchers found Mara's body the night of the slide, during the initial search operations by first responders able to reach the site. Crews found Timothy and Beth Heller the next day.

They found Kara on Saturday evening, Nov. 25, after a scent-detection dog indicated on an area in the landslide

debris.

Searchers had not yet found Derek Heller, 12, or Otto Florschutz, 65, as of Monday afternoon, Nov. 27.

Derek was in sixth grade.

Christina Florschutz was rescued from the upper level of their home the morning after the slide and brought to the hospital for medical treatment, where she was reported in good condition later that day.

Responders used drones, helicopters and planes, teams with scent-detection dogs and searchers aboard boats to search the slide area last week.

Though state agencies and others have ended the active search for survivors, "it remains a priority of the state of Alaska and Alaska State Troopers to locate the missing Alaskans so that we can bring closure to their families and the community," Department of Public Safety officials said in a statement.

The bodies of the four people recovered from the slide area were sent to the State Medical Examiner's Office in Anchorage for autopsy.

The 450-foot-wide slide hit three homes, including the Florschutz home (upland) and Heller residence (water side of the highway). A third home (upland) was unoccupied at the time.

The Hellers owned and operated Heller High Water, a contracting business, working on docks, barge landings and other marine facilities.

The company has been active throughout Southeast, including making repairs to the city-owned barge landing ramp in Wrangell in 2021 and pulling out rusted steel pilings in 2022 at the site of the former 6-Mile sawmill.

Beth Heller served on the school board 2019-2020 after several years on the school district's parent advisory committee.

It was her first time in elected office. In an interview with the Sentinel in 2019, she said she decided to run because she believed in volunteering in the community, and because she had three children in school. Her biggest concern, she said, was the harm of state funding cuts to the schools.

Beth and Timothy both grew up in Wrangell and married in August 2010, said Tyla Nelson, who described herself as Beth Heller's best friend since high school.

Nelson described her friend as a "fan-

Continued on page 3

Burglary suspect in custody

By ORIN PIERSON
Pilot editor

An arrest has been made for the recent string of burglaries of downtown Petersburg businesses.

Zachary Bray, 27, was taken into custody by Petersburg Police Department (PPD) on Nov. 22.

According to charging documents filed with the court by PPD, an initial warrant to search a package was issued after USPS Postal Inspectors received a report from the Petersburg Post Office of multiple suspicious contacts with Bray seeking to collect a suspicious package, followed by a break-in at the post office.

PPD Officer Jared Popp executed

that search warrant, and inside the package found 14.17 grams of suspected counterfeit M30 pills believed to contain fentanyl.

Next, the Petersburg Police, Alaska Wildlife Troopers, and United States Postal Inspectors executed a search warrant looking for evidence of narcotics trafficking and possession at a residence in Petersburg.

Bray was at the residence and was placed into custody at that time. Officers searched the residence and found what they described as items commonly used in narcotics sales, as well as evidence of fentanyl consumption.

According to the charging documents, when questioned at the police

Continued on page 5



Yesterday's News

News from 25-50-75-100 years ago

November 30, 1923 - The Thanksgiving Eve masquerade this year was a most enjoyable and successful affair. The hall was crowded and the costumes were many and varied. The hit of the evening was Barney Google and Spark Plug, enacted by Alva Allen with Mat Rayner and Jonas Hallingstad as the “front and hind legs of the ‘orse.” Mrs. Lillian Renke as the Irish hod carrier was very clever and caused considerable comment. Chris Gronseth as the snowman was a decided novelty, his costume showing considerable ingenuity and much work. Mrs. Hans Wick as a widow received a prize as the best dressed woman. Mrs. Pete Skog in a Spanish costume was awarded the best sustained character prize and Louis Tenfjord, in a Norwegian national costume, received the gents best dressed prize. Mrs. J. Grant Sutherland, representing death in a skeleton costume, was awarded the most original ladies prize and, while the lady herself is a long ways removed from a skeleton, the representation was very realistic. There were many other good costumes which caused much comment and deserved prizes.

December 3, 1948 - Bruce MacKechnie is rapidly recovering this week and may return to work at the Men’s Shop on Monday following an accident in Blind Slough last Sunday afternoon. Bruce was en route to the power plant to deliver mail to city employees and three guns to be repaired by Bert Zuver. Forced to leave his boat and outboard motor about three-quarters of a mile from the slough and proceeded to follow the trail for some time before crossing to the other side on the ice. On his attempt to cross over, the ice broke, taking Bruce down into the icy water.

Wearing heavy clothing, boots and a pack sack he was almost helpless and only after about thirty-five minutes of clinging to and cutting the ice with his hunting knife was he able to reach shore. Bruce had also miscalculated the tide. Knowing the ice was weak in spots, he figured if the ice did break he could still wade to shore. His pack was too tight to his back to be removed in the water. He was carrying his own .30 caliber Remington which he tossed several feet onto the ice, but it also broke the surface and sank. He hopes it can be retrieved by Bert Zuver at low tide. After reaching shore only superhuman endurance took him to his boat by stumbling and crawling. He managed to start his outboard motor and went immediately to the Smikum Club cabin where he started a small fire and waited for help from Bert Zuver and Ernie Young. Bruce was spotted while in the ice by Mrs. Ernest Young through binoculars and she called the power house to

notify Zuver and Young. Zuver arrived at the cabin first and made hot coffee and supplied MacKechnie with dry clothes. Recovering somewhat at the cabin, Bruce left and motored to the end of the road where his car was waiting and arrived home at 7 p.m. Bruce is receiving treatment and recovering at home.

November 29, 1973 - Carl Thynes, principal of Petersburg High, has announced some changes in the gym schedule for the remainder of the school year. The changes are a result of the energy crisis and are being implemented in an effort to conserve fuel and electricity. Thynes also imposed several other restrictions to the use of the gym: all groups are to vacate the gym by 7:30; lighting is to be reduced and heating held to a minimum; when varsity team is on the road, the JV team shall utilize the 4:00 to 5:30 time period and drill team the 5:30 to 6:15 time slot. Gym use will terminate at 6:15 on

those days. A new schedule will be announced when wrestling begins. The gym is also being insulted and Thynes has a crew cleaning out the storage area. A number of useful items, too good to junk out, will be free for the taking at the west end of the gym at 11:00 a.m. on Friday. Included are 15 student desks, 2 workbenches, 1 lathe table, 1 drawing table, several windows, a magazine rack, several chairs, a small child’s chair, and 2 old wrestling mats. These are free for the taking on a first come, first grab basis. Thynes also announced that the schools will be closed an additional two days during the Christmas vacation period. Students will now return to school on January 7. The lost hours will be made up by taking a shorter Spring vacation, Thynes said.

December 3, 1998 - If you haven’t gotten into the holiday spirit yet, Vara Wright’s latest production called “Christmas for a King” should do the trick. Old King Cole is the center of this play that runs December 4 and 5 in the middle school auditorium at 7 p.m. Apparently he’s not such a merry old soul in this story which also features other nursery rhyme characters such as Simple Simon, Little Bo Peep, Widow O’Grumpity and the Little Match Girl, who plays a short but pivotal role in the script, according to writer and director Wright. “It’s the story of Old King Cole and he’s very bored and very wealthy and

there’s nothing he wants. The villagers turn him around,” Wright said. While the characters are all children’s story heroes, the characters have been enhanced a bit to keep adults interested, no doubt with a healthy heaping of Wright’s trademark wordplay. The play is the result of last year’s success for the Magic Moments Theater, “A Christmas in Oz.” Wright said people responded well to a Christmas play and gave her the encouragement for this effort. The cast is about 13 characters in all, with musical accompaniment by pianist Joy Davis, several soloists and a group of carolers. The script will be the sixth original Wright play to be performed in Petersburg. Tickets are \$1 for kids and seniors and \$3 for adults.

PETERSBURG HAPPENINGS

Brought to you by:  

THURSDAY, November 30

Stories In Motion: 11:00am, Public Library

Forest Service Informational Hiring Event: 12:00pm and 5:30pm, USFS Downtown District Office

Share Coalition Meeting: 12:00pm, PMC Dorothy Ingle Conf. Rm

Wrestling Mini-Dual against Sitka & senior recognition: 6:30 pm PHS Gym

Free Dinner Get Together: 5:30pm, Lutheran Church Basement

Elementary School 4th and 5th Grade Music Concert: 6:00pm, Wright Auditorium

Rainforest Festival Event Birding on Mitkof, and film “Singing Planet”: 7:00pm, Wright Auditorium

Ragnarok Rollers Practice: 7:30pm, Parks & Rec Gym

FRIDAY, December 1

Al-Anon Support Group: 12:00pm, Episcopal Church

Art Opening: The Work of Joe Viechnicki: 5:00pm, Firelight Gallery

Opening Artist’s Reception for Suzanne Fuqua Art Show: 5:00pm, Clausen Memorial Museum

Bingo Night: 6:00pm, Sons of Norway Hall

AA Candlelight Meeting: 7:00pm, Episcopal Church

SATURDAY, December 2

Youth Mental Health First Aid Course: 8:00am to 5:00, Fire Hall

Christmas Bazaar: 10:00am, Sons of Norway Hall

Elks Hoop Shoot and Free Throw Contest for Kids 8-13: 2:00pm, Community Gym

SUNDAY, December 3

Knitting Group - all welcome: 2:00pm, Mountain View Manor Social Hall

Ragnarok Rollers Practice: 5:00pm Parks & Rec Community Center

MONDAY, December 4

Tai Chi: 7:00am, Mountain View Manor Social Hall

Early Voting for Tribal Council: 8:00am, PIA Conference Room

Borough Assembly Meeting: 12:00pm, Municipal Building

PIA Monthly Meeting: 5:00pm, Hallingstad-Peratrovich Building

Burger Night: 5:30pm, Moose Lodge

AA Women’s Meeting: 7:00 pm, Presbyterian Church

TUESDAY, December 5

AA 12x12 Meeting: 7:00 pm, Holy Cross Classroom

WEDNESDAY, December 6

Tai Chi: 7:00am, Mountain View Manor Social Hall

Rotary Club Lunch and Fellowship: 12:00pm, Salvation Army Hall

Siren Alert & Warning System Test: 12:00pm

Free Suicide Prevention Training: 6:00pm, Fire Hall

Free Super For All: 6:00pm, First Baptist Church

ANB/ANS Monthly Meeting: 7:00pm, ANB/ANS Hall

To add an event to the Happenings calendar call us at 772-9393 or email Pilotpub@gmail.com

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PETERSBURG TIDE TABLE

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2023

	HIGH TIDES				LOW TIDES			
	A.M.		P.M.		A.M.		P.M.	
	Time	Ft.	Time	Ft.	Time	Ft.	Time	Ft.
30 Thu	2:58	15.1	2:28	17.0	8:33	4.6	9:18	-0.7
1 Fri	3:41	14.4	3:09	15.8	9:15	5.3	10:01	0.4
2 Sat	4:27	13.7	3:53	14.6	10:03	5.9	10:47	1.4
3 Sun	5:17	13.2	4:44	13.4	10:59	6.3	11:38	2.4
4 Mon	6:12	12.9	5:48	12.3	12:10	6.4
5 Tue	7:10	13.0	7:03	11.6	0:34	3.1	1:28	6.0
6 Wed	8:04	13.5	8:20	11.6	1:33	3.7	2:39	5.1

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FERRY SCHEDULE

Terminal Office • 772-3855 or call 800-642-0066


NORTHBOUND DEPARTURES

FRI 12/15	KENNICOTT	05:30 P.M.
FRI 12/22	KENNICOTT	10:45 P.M.
FRI 12/29	KENNICOTT	05:30 P.M.
FRI 1/05	KENNICOTT	08:30 P.M.
SAT 1/13	KENNICOTT	01:30 A.M.

SOUTHBOUND DEPARTURES

MON 12/18	KENNICOTT	02:15 A.M.
MON 12/25	KENNICOTT	01:30 A.M.
MON 1/01	KENNICOTT	01:45 A.M.
SUN 1/07	KENNICOTT	11:45 P.M.
MON 1/15	KENNICOTT	05:15 A.M.

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Landslide victims



The Heller family had a portrait taken at Sandy Point in December of 2021. From left: Derek, Timothy, Kara, Beth, and Mara,

Continued from page 1
tastic human,” adding, “she was a wonderful mother (and) did everything for those babies.”
This past spring, Derek Heller played the Tin Man in the elementary school production of “The Wizard of Oz.”
Kara took first place in this year’s Fourth of July Crazy Crafts race, teaming up with Violet Allen for the winning entry in the 17-year-old-and-under category.
Otto Florschutz was among the 48 candidates who ran in the special election primary in June 2022 to fill the seat of the late U.S. Rep. Don Young. He said in a pre-election interview that he was running not expecting to win but to ensure that voters would have the option of a solidly pro-life candidate.
He received 193 votes out of nearly 162,000 cast, doing better than 24 other candidates in the crowded field.
Florschutz said he was known for his ability to forge consensus.
“As a 42-year commercial fisherman I have worn many hats,” he said. “Besides catching fish, I have served in community elected positions, done boat repair, mechanics, welding, carpentry, business and much more.”
He had returned to town from a fishing trip the day before the slide.
Florschutz had been elected three times to the Wrangell Port Commission and had also served on the local Fish and Game Advisory Committee.

The Anchorage Daily News contributed reporting for this story.

Florschutz survives after landslide traps her overnight

By CAROLEINE JAMES
Wrangell Sentinel reporter

WRANGELL — Christina Florschutz, an aide at Evergreen Elementary School, survived the 11-Mile landslide killed at least four people Nov. 20 — even after debris destroyed her home and trapped her overnight.

The evening of the slide, Florschutz went upstairs to take a shower. After she got out, she heard “a horrible noise, a very loud noise.”

Before she could react, the landslide slammed into her house, tossing her “like a piece of weightless popcorn” around the room until she lost consciousness.

When she woke up, she was trapped between the roof of her house and a pile of debris. It was dark, rain was falling, and

she had no idea how big the slide was or whether anyone in town knew about it yet.

“I was hanging kind of head down, at an angle, with my feet up,” she recalled in an interview from her hospital bed four days later. “It was fairly uncomfortable.” She had sustained a few injuries and her heart was pounding.

She felt around in the darkness and found a plastic bag full of pieces of polar fleece yardage from her upstairs sewing room. “Right then and there, I knew I was going to live,” she said. “I was going to live. I was meant to live.”

She pulled the fleece over herself and waited for morning. “I had awful leg cramps,” she said. “I was screaming with the leg cramps at times.”

Sometime after dawn, she unstuck herself and walked to-

ward the back corner of the house. “The house had slid down mostly intact,” she recalled. “And then it slammed into the old shop and the bedroom ... shot off and continued farther. They found pieces of it in the water.”

Surveying the wreckage, she was shocked by the size of the slide and wondered if other homes had been hit. “I thought, ‘Wow, I hope Wrangell is still around.’” As she continued to look through the debris, she found a bag of women’s large pajama bottoms, which she had bought at the thrift store to use for sewing projects.

“They’re really good quality for fleece,” she said, though “I shouldn’t be telling my secrets.”

She used the pajama bottoms to cover her legs, arms and head. Then, she started off across the debris field until she got to its edge, which was piled high with trees.

“I see hats going through the trees,” she said. “Baseball caps. And I thought, ‘people!’”

She doesn’t remember exactly who found her first, but eventually a group of six or



PHOTO BY CAROLEINE JAMES/WRANGELL SENTINEL

From her hospital bed on Nov. 24, Christina Florschutz demonstrates how she pulled pajama bottoms that she found in the debris over her legs, arms and head to keep warm. Her house was destroyed in the landslide, and after spending the night in the wreckage, she was rescued the morning of Nov. 21.

seven people put her in a sled and dragged her across the rubble, she recalled.

She spent the rest of the week recovering at Wrangell Medical Center, receiving calls from friends. Once she’s released, she’s looking forward to greeting the third graders she works with. “When they heard that I was actually alive, they got a little rowdy,” she said.

Florschutz believes the circumstances of her survival are a miracle and is grateful to the community for their support. Being in Alaska forces you to “learn to live with others and help each other,” she said. “It forces you to not try to be an island. ... We can’t exist without each other. And the greatest treasure that we have here are the people.”

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BAZAAR
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To the Editor

To Whom It May Concern

To the Editor:

I am 82 years old now. My great-grandchildren are seventh generation of family residents growing up in Petersburg. Kay and I were adopted and given Tlingit names by elder Pete Marten, Senior, fifty years ago, into a Tlingit society that has been scientifically and

indisputably proven to exist in S.E. Alaska for over 10,000 years and literally hundreds of generations.

Thirty years ago, Spencer Israelson, who spent his youth at Point Agassiz, took me to the mainland and showed me many petroglyphs that he and his friends had found as they grew up in the area. He also showed me evidence of a native fish trap at Muddy River.

My grandfather, Carol Clausen, took me to Sandy Beach when I was eight years old and showed me the petroglyphs there and the fish traps which have been carbon dated and documented to have existed at least 2000 years which was about the same time that Jesus was born. Several years ago, a freshet at the south end of Blind Slough revealed a fish trap carbon dated 5000

years ago. Tlingit fish traps have been found in several places in Wrangell Narrows, Duncan Canal, and the mainland.

When I was 24 years old and living in Sitka, I became close friends with an 85 year old Tlinget from Angoon. Bob Zubuoff was born around 1880, and was taught by his grandfather and his great-grandfather. He said, "this land is sacred for us to live on and is to be respected. It is a great part of what we leave to those who follow us. The Creator and mother earth have given us this land to use to survive; and we give thanks always for what we have been provided. We leave this spiritual place as we have found it."

very small portion of land to be returned to them.

By our being honored and given Tlinget names, Kay and I will not benefit from this transfer of land. The only satisfaction will be being able to see this land returned to those who deserve it. Let us please show our support to these five communities. Remember in your decision that they have promised, if and when the land is returned to them, they will allow public use and public access to all of us.

Sincerely,
Mike Schwartz

GUEST EDITORIAL

Regional monitoring system needed for landslides

By LARRY PERSILY
Wrangell Sentinel publisher

Southeast Alaska is known for rain, wind-storms, mountainsides that loom above residential areas — and landslides that occur with increasing frequency.

Sitka knows the risk, and the pain, losing three people in a 2015 landslide. Haines lost two people in a 2020 slide. And now Wrangell is added to the list. That list doesn't include the multiple landslides over the years that caused damage and fear, but thankfully no deaths.

After the 2015 slide, the Sitka Sound Science Center took the lead and worked with the community — and federal money — to set up a landslide warning system. "We started when we had our landslide. We started calling scientists and asking: 'What do we need to know about landslides,'" Lisa Busch, executive director at the science center, said.

Mudflows, even stuffed with fallen trees, fall too fast for motion sensors to provide adequate warning, so Sitka focused on placing rain gauges and soil-monitor sensors around town. Data from those instruments is fed into a central unit, where a geoscientist can analyze the numbers and post the appropriate warning to the website sitkalandslide.org. From there, people can make their own decisions whether to stay in place or move to safer ground.

The Sitka website includes a historical perspective too. For example, the high-risk warning level includes the message: "Multiple landslides are very likely to occur in the Sitka

area. There have been three storms in the last 20 years with similarly intense rainfall, and all three of them initiated multiple landslides."

Expanding a similar system around Southeast of gauges, real-time analysis and terrain maps showing people the risk in specific areas will cost millions of dollars. But it would be money well spent for the safety of tens of thousands of people living in coastal communities from Metlakatla to Skagway.

The Sitka Sound Science Center received a federal grant to design and develop monitoring and warning systems in collaboration with tribal entities in six communities: Yakutat, Skagway, Hoonah, Klukwan, Kasaan and Craig. The next step should be to expand that effort, which will require state and federal help.

Wrangell's Interim Borough Manager Mason Villarma was scheduled to travel to Washington, D.C., this week to meet with the state's congressional delegation and officials with the Federal Emergency Management Agency. His meetings follow on discussions he had in Wrangell last week with Gov. Mike Dunleavy and other state officials.

Villarma said he respectfully asked: "My question to the governor and his commissioners was, 'Does something have to happen before we do something?'"

It's a good question, and one that the governor and other state officials, Alaska's congressional delegation and federal agencies need to work on. A regionwide monitoring system to at least provide people with a warning of what could come down the mountainside would be a good answer.

The five communities involved in the Landless claim have promised that when the land is finally acquired, they would allow existing public use and public access to all of us forever.

The Tongass National Forest is named after the Tongass people, Taant'a Kwaan, of Kichxaan, which remains unacknowledged by most of us. The indigenous people of Southeast Alaska, have stewarded the entirety of this area since time immemorial. These five communities are asking for less than 1/2 of 1% to be returned to their care. The Landless legislation is unanimously championed by Alaska's duly elected, bipartisan delegation.

Petersburg's Borough Assembly voted down supporting their efforts by a very close margin. Hopefully, they will revisit this issue and vote to support these landless communities in their quest for a

Clear answers to our Petersburg Medical Center Part 2

To the Editor:

After a 3 day exhaustive comparison of the old city charter and the 2006 Borough code I found the following. The old city code gave the hospital board complete control. As of 2006 the Borough Assembly is to provide procedures on real property and finances. After September 15th PMC is to provide a yearly audit and 6 year plan on capital improvements to the assembly for review and discussion. If any loan, line of credit or similar financing is sought by PMC, a note of the people and assembly approval is required. However all municipal buildings belong to the Borough (public) technically. You can review the code and

Continued on page 5

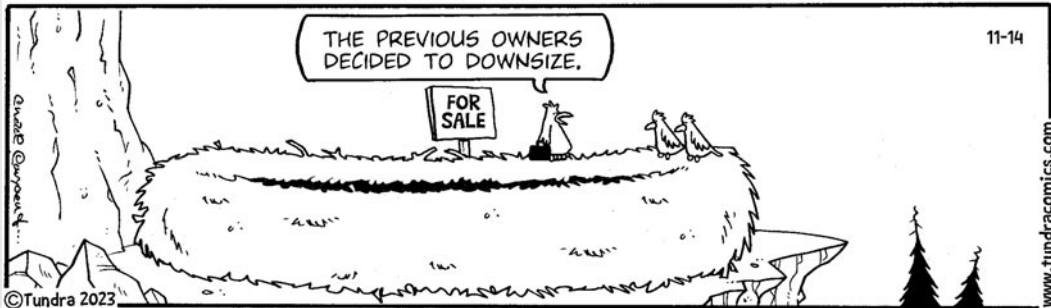
Ritter's River

by Marc Lutz



Tundra

by Chad Carpenter



2017 GENERAL EXCELLENCE FIRST PLACE NATIONAL NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION AND NAMED BEST WEEKLY NEWSPAPER IN 2013 & 2015 BY THE ALASKA PRESS CLUB

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Opinion

To the Editor

Continued from page 4

ordinances at Petersburgak.gov. There is a link for the medical center.

Great News!! As of August 2023 the PMC board meetings are on KFSK and held in the assembly chambers. They are held the 4th Thursday of the month at 5:30 (exception, due to Thanksgiving Dec 7 is the next one). They are extremely informative and include about 8 committee reports. The agenda and board members email addresses can be found at pmcak.org. During the board meeting one can give a 5 minute public statement. Besides contacting board members you can email any statements to kleatherman at pmc-health.org.

You can also call into KFSK (772-3808) at 12:30, on the day of hospital board meetings, to ask questions of the PMC staff. I believe this is the only regular opportunity to ask questions. Marlene Cushing is rotating boxes for comments throughout town.

In our new facility there shall be the same number of beds and staff. MRI's may be available. The energy and space will be more efficient. The amount of square foot requirements for each section is determined by code.

PMC is requesting 37 million from our state budget. You can contact our state legislators by calling the LIO at 772-3741 as of Jan. 2024 for contact information. Please get involved. Thanks to our PMC board members and staff. In Oct 2023, 1262 Petersburg residents voted. I hope this reflects community involvement. We only have 3200 people. Eighty percent are over 19 years of age.

Respectfully,
Cindy Lynn

The Community of Petersburg
and the Oxford Carolers Present:

A Winter Community Concert
Songs of the season for and by Petersburg
Wednesday, Dec. 20th 7 pm
Lutheran Church Sanctuary

Well practiced musicians are invited to contact
Nicole McMurren by Dec. 17th at
907-518-4223 to join the program

Burglary arrest

Continued from page 1

station, Bray admitted to expecting the package containing fentanyl pills, and that, to make money after a rough summer fishing season, he planned to sell the fentanyl for profit.

Bray was booked into Petersburg jail and charged with Misconduct Involving a Controlled Substance in the Second Degree, a Class A Felony.

During the search of Bray's residence, items reported stolen during the recent burglary at marijuana dispensary The 420 were observed.

A task force officer contacted a state judge to amend their search warrant to include the items from the local burglaries, according to Petersburg Police Chief Jim Kerr.

Items found matched the inventory of stolen items provided to police by The 420. Reportedly, police also found items of clothing that were consistent with those seen in security camera footage from the downtown burglaries.

According to police, during his interview at the time of the arrest for the drug charge, Bray admitted to the burglaries at El Zarape, The 420, Petersburg Moose Lodge, Blomster Hus, and the post office, allegedly stating that the thefts were conducted in order to send payment to the drug dealers who had allegedly shipped the pills and were now threatening harm and demanding cash.

Police charged Bray with five Class C Felony counts of Burglary in the Second Degree.

According to the charging documents, all of the burglaries included additional crimes of theft and criminal mischief due to damage caused by the use of a pry bar to force open cash drawers and doors. Consistent pry marks were reportedly displayed on most of the damaged items.

That resulted in more charges including three Class C Felony counts of Theft in the Second Degree of property with a value of more than \$750, one misdemeanor count of Theft in the Fourth Degree for property valued less than \$250, two misdemeanor counts of Criminal Mischief in the Third Degree for damage to property in an amount \$1,000 or more, and three misdemeanor counts of

Criminal Mischief in the Fourth Degree for property damage in an amount between \$250 and \$750.

These charges were presented during Bray's Felony First Appearance on Nov. 22, at which time a public defender was appointed.

The prosecutor contended that Bray posed a flight risk if released from custody; considering this and other factors, an appearance bond was set in the amount of \$10,000 with 10 percent cash secured. Superior Court Judge Katherine Lybrand explained the defendant would need to pay \$1,000 of the appearance bond upfront, but if he failed to make any court appearances the other \$9,000 would be imposed.

A \$10,000 cash performance bond was set, which would be forfeited if any of the defendant's conditions of release were violated. Combined, the defendant would need to produce \$11,000 to leave police custody while the case moves through the court system.

During the First Appearance, the prosecution chose to drop all the theft and criminal mischief charges, citing a lack of detail in the probable cause statement regarding the dollar amounts for each specific offense.

Chief Kerr expects those charges will be reintroduced when the damage estimates from each break in and the value of stolen goods are presented to the grand jury.

Bray remains in custody in the Petersburg jail at this time.

Chief Kerr stated that the police department is confident that he acted alone during these burglaries.

"There were businesses that combed through lots of surveillance footage to help us piece the timelines together," said Chief Kerr. "To get the person walking to the businesses, leaving the businesses. It was basically a community effort. All their hours put in to assist us, that's what made the arrest."

Chief Kerr emphasized his gratitude to "the community and business owners for working with the police department. That's how stuff gets solved."

Police report

November 21 - The Petersburg Police Department (PPD) advised the Department of Transportation of several downed trees and flooding along the Mitkof Highway in the vicinity of Crystal Lake

Hatchery.

PPD served a protective order on Lumber Street.

A fire drill was conducted on Charles W Street.

An officer provided a courtesy transport to a highly intoxicated individual on Sing Lee Alley.

Zachary Bray was arrested on Howkan Street and charged with burglary.

PPD received a report of a cement block askew in a parking lot. Public Works (PPW) was notified and responded.

November 22 - An officer investigated suspicious activity at Sandy Beach Park and determined it was non-criminal.

An officer conducted a security check at a business on Fram Street and found everything secure.

Property found on the airport by-pass road was turned in to the PPD.

An officer assisted the owner of a business on Sing Lee Alley with a security walk-through.

An officer conducted a civil stand-by on Mitkof Highway.

An officer conducted a civil stand-by on Howkan Street.

PPD received a report of a nuisance dog at large on Mitkof Highway.

November 23 - A driver on Haugen Drive was issued a warning for headlight requirements and their passenger was given a warning for seat belt requirements.

November 24 - An officer conducted extra patrols downtown.

PPD received a report of household trash in the roadway, due to wildlife, on Mitkof Highway. An officer attempted to locate the responsible party.

PPD received a report of an individual creating a noise disturbance on North Nordic Drive.

November 25 - PPD received a report of minors trespassing on property on North Nordic Drive.

November 26 - Dustin Mullen was arrested on Excel Street for alleged domestic violence assault in the fourth degree.

An officer conducted extra patrols in the South 6th Street area.

November 27 - An officer conducted extra patrols in the Ira II Street area.

Property lost on Sing Lee Alley was reported to the PPD.

An individual on Birch Street spoke with dispatch regarding a civil issue.

November 28 - An alarm activated at Pump Station #8. Water/Wastewater (W/WW) was notified and responded.

An officer responded to a report of suspicious activity on South Nordic Drive and determined it was non-criminal.

An officer responded to a report of a dangerous driver on Frederick Drive but was unable to locate the described vehicle.

An officer spoke with an individual concerning a civil matter.

PPD received a report of suspicious activity on 6th Street.

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Eyewitnesses and slide evacuees share their stories

By **CAROLEINE JAMES**
Wrangell Sentinel reporter

WRANGELL — People living near the landslide’s path had a harrowing night Nov. 20, as homes were evacuated and first responders searched for people who were unaccounted for.

Stan Guggenbickler was missing overnight after going for a drive on the evening of Nov. 20. He had baked a cake for his son’s 18th birthday and wanted to let the cake cool before frosting it, so he headed up the road from his house at Panhandle Trailer Court to Middle Ridge cabin in his truck.

After turning onto the road to Middle Ridge, debris covered his exit, trapping him. “It happened 30 seconds after I drove across it,” Guggenbickler said. “The road, it just fell right off. Took all the dirt, everything.”

The slide was 3,000 feet long and intercepted the road in two places. It wasn’t the same one that destroyed three homes at 11-Mile, but it was on the same mountain.

“I wish I’d stayed home and waited for (the cake) to cool,” Guggenbickler added.

He slept in his truck and began heading back to town by foot the next morning. He had prepared himself for a long walk, since he’d learned via his truck radio that nobody was allowed to drive past 6-Mile. Thankfully, state troopers picked him up at the junction near Pats Creek Road.

“Everything happened for the good,” Guggenbickler said.

Once he got home safely, he baked his son a new cake.

The 11-Mile slide occurred a few driveways toward town from Mandy Simpson’s house. Shortly before 8:51 p.m., “we heard it happening,” she said. “We weren’t sure if it was just the wind or not. I was ready to scream at my kid to get out of the house, but it happened so fast and stopped so fast, we wouldn’t have been able to get out.”

“Luckily, my house is safe,” she added.

She evacuated farther down the road with her boyfriend

and child and on Nov. 22, was waiting for the go-ahead to return home.

Past 9-Mile, 55 homes — including the one where Simpson and her family took shelter — were still without power days after the slide. The road through the debris was cleared on Sunday, Nov. 26, and work began shortly after to restore power lines.

Angela Stires moved to Wrangell from Palmer a year ago, and lives at 12.6-Mile. On the evening of Nov. 20, “the dogs started barking and our power went out,” she said. In Palmer, her family experienced frequent power outages, so Stires typically looks at the clock when the outages start, so she can measure how long they last. The clock read 8:45 p.m. when the lights went out that night, according to Stires.

Her family stayed where they were, listening to radio updates, until the firefighters arrived and initiated the evacuation process. “They were super nice and super polite,” she said. “My kids, two of them want to be firefighters now.”

Eric Yancey picked up the Stires from Charlie Hazel’s dock with his boat, the Rainforest Islander, and transported them past the slide area to town at about 3:12 a.m. A crowd of around 40 to 50 community members greeted the evacuees once they arrived, Stires said, and even helped carry the family’s puppy, who was nervous about water travel, off the boat.

Yancey said he transported about 19 people into town that night.

Stires and her family stayed at the Stikine Inn. “The Stik has been awesome,” she said. “They gave us all rooms, even with our dogs and everything. They were up all night getting people in.”

After settling it at the Stik, her family took advantage of the Parks and Recreation community center, which has opened its facilities to people who have been displaced by the disaster. Her children entertained themselves on scooters at the old gym. “It’s truly awesome,” she said of the community effort.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Debris from a massive landslide extends into the sea at 11-Mile Zimovia Highway, cutting off road access for homes south of the slide. This photo was taken Nov. 21, looking north.

Landslide likely caused by rain, high winds

By **CAROLEINE JAMES**
Wrangell Sentinel reporter

WRANGELL — Heavy rains, high winds and the unique topography of the area likely caused the Nov. 20 landslide at 11-Mile.

The type of landslide that hit Wrangell is called a “debris flow” — a “notably destructive” event that is common in the region, said state geologist Barrett Salisbury at a Nov. 21 press conference. They occur when soil becomes so saturated with water that individual pieces of soil are no longer touching each other, and lack the strength to hold themselves in place.

Debris flows can reach speeds of 35 miles per hour, he said.

By studying the way water moves through the land and identifying the areas where it accumulates, geologists can guess where and how a landslide started.

Data on what triggered the 11-Mile slide is “super preliminary,” said Mitch McDonald, a geologist with the state Department of Transportation. But he thinks it’s possible that the slide may have started somewhere in the middle of the mountain, not at the top. “There’s a feature mid-slope that looks like it could trap water,” he said.

The water saturation process is not a single-day event, added McDonald. Instead, areas of saturated soil build up over time, though a single concentrated period of heavy rainfall can cause a slide.

On Nov. 20, more than an inch of rain fell at 11-Mile within a six-hour period — almost twice as much rain as was measured with the airport’s rain gauge.

A gauge high on Zarembo Island just west of Wrangell also registered a 70 mph gust of wind, “right before we got the first report from the city of Wrangell about this landslide,” said Juneau-based meteorologist Andrew Park.

From top to bottom, the slide is about 1,500 feet long. Where it crosses Zimovia Highway, it’s 450 feet wide, but is likely more than twice that at its widest point, according to McDonald. He estimates that there are between 3,500 and 4,000 cubic yards of debris on the highway.

Several bedrock ledges cross the slide’s path on the way down, and likely “(played) a huge part in how the landslide is shaped top to bottom,” said Salisbury.

An old logging road in the slide path directed some of the flow to the north, causing a few offshoots in that direction. Several second-



PHOTO COURTESY ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

The mountainside was stripped of trees and ground cover up toward the 1,500-foot level.

ary slides also occurred high in the hills on the same night, including a 3,000-foot one that blocked access to Middle Ridge cabin.

Thanks to the region’s rainy climate and steep slopes, debris flows are an ever-present risk in Southeast communities. “Without specialized instruments in place long before an event like this, it’s virtually impossible to prevent this type of catastrophe,” said Salisbury.

However, some communities do take preventative measures. After experiencing multiple deadly landslides in 2015, Sitka created the Sitka GeoTask Force to map hillslopes and make models that could be used for prediction.

Since the Sitka slides in 2015, the state has been responding to a higher volume of similar disasters. “It’s really only since the Kramer landslide (in Sitka) that we seem to be responding to these larger events that impact communities,” said McDonald. “Is it growing in intensity? Is it climate change? It’s hard to tell. Sometimes, it’s just that we had a data gap in the past.”

New imaging and reporting technology, along with the prevalence of cell phones and social media, mean that news of any given disaster spreads farther and faster. McDonald doesn’t know for sure whether the frequency of landslides in Southeast is actually increasing.

Regardless, the state is expanding its capacity to respond to these events.

“I think what we as agencies are all learning is that this is an interdisciplinary effort,” said McDonald. “I think that’s really what’s coming together in Alaska right now. They’re definitely encouraging us to work with other agencies. ... We’re making gains in that and getting better.”

“This (Wrangell) has been the best-supported response that I’ve ever been involved with, based on the technology that we have,” he continued. He’s also responded to landslides in Sitka and Haines.

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Sitka responded to fatal 2015 landslide with monitoring system

By LARRY PERSILY
 Wrangell Sentinel writer

A series of landslides hit Sitka more than eight years ago during heavy rain, with the largest striking a new subdivision and killing three workers. It prompted the community, led by the Sitka Sound Science Center, to set up a landslide warning system.

The system includes rain gauges and soil-moisture sensors spread around town, with a website that advises people of the risk level of a landslide.

It took about four years to develop the system — and a lot of federal grant money.

“We started when we had our landslide. We started calling scientists and asking: ‘What do we need to know about landslides,’” Lisa Busch, executive director at the science center, said Friday, Nov. 23.

The system includes 10 rain gauges spread out north and south of downtown, and soil-moisture sensors, she said.

It does not include motion sensors, which are not very useful for the fast-moving, watery debris flows that roar down a hillside, she explained.

The rain gauges and moisture sensors transit real-time data, which is collected and analyzed by a geoscientist for the low-, medium- or high-risk warnings posted to the website at sitka-landslide.org.

The high-risk warning includes the message: “Multiple landslides are very likely to occur in the Sitka area. There have been three storms in the last 20 years with similarly intense rainfall, and all three of them initiated multiple landslides.”

Sitka has gone to a medium-risk warning twice in the past year, Busch said.

The website also provides a terrain map, showing areas of low to high susceptibility of landslides.

“Rain intensity is definitely a factor” in slides, she said. “The climate scientists say we’re going to have more events. ... People are realizing this is what it means to respond to climate change.”

Besides learning more about heavy rains and the potential for landslides, each community should decide what level of risk people are comfortable with, and if they want to designate safe places for residents to gather during high-risk periods, Busch said.

One thing the Sitka team has learned from its gauges is that rainfall can vary widely across the same community. “They’ll be as different as four inches,” she said of the reading from gauges around town.

The National Science Foundation awarded a \$5 million, five-year grant in February 2022 to the Sitka Sound Science Center to start work on a network that someday could reach across

Southeast.

The money is not enough to set up a system for every community, nor will it cover ongoing operational expenses of a full network.

The project was designed to develop monitoring and warning systems in collaboration with tribal entities in six communities: Yakutat, Skagway, Hoonah, Klukwan, Kasaan and Craig.

The money will also go toward the Kutí Project, which will use data from sensors and historical records to develop “predictive models of the impacts of extreme weather events in Southeast Alaska,” according to the science center’s grant announcement. “It will study the impacts of atmospheric rivers on this region’s coastlines.”

Kutí is the Lingít word for “weather.”

The Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska also is on the Kutí team, along with several state and federal agencies and two universities in Oregon.

Alaska’s senior U.S. senator, Lisa Murkowski, succeeded in getting a \$500,000 federal grant this year through the U.S. Geological Survey to help train people in the measuring equipment. The Sitka Sound Science Center and Tlingit and Haida will share in the grant, Busch said.

Managing and analyzing the data from the gauges and sensors is a big part of the job, she

said. It could cost a million dollars a years to operate a warning system across Southeast Alaska, from Metlakatla to Lynn Canal.

The biggest of the slides that hit Sitka on Aug. 18, 2015, killed Elmer Diaz, 26, his brother Ulises Diaz, 25, and William Storz, 62, who were

working at a new subdivision under construction. It came after 2.6 inches of rain fell in a 10-hour period, including 1.5 inches in a three-hour stretch that morning.

There were at least six landslides in various parts of town that day.

Satellite link in a backpack provides Wi-Fi service for landslide responders

By LARRY PERSILY
 Wrangell Sentinel writer

WRANGELL — First responders and volunteers working at the site of the deadly landslide have a Wi-Fi signal, thanks to a backpack satellite-link setup the Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Tribes of Alaska sent to Wrangell.

The council’s operations center keeps the Starlink setups in Juneau and Sitka for emergencies and community use, said Chris Cropley, director of the Tidal Network at Tlingit and Haida.

The council sent two of its Starlink packs to Wrangell on Nov. 22, and the service was up and running at the landslide response site that same day.

An antenna, which is about 20 inches tall, router and cables all fit in a backpack, and can provide high-speed service comparable to fiber optic internet delivery, Cropley said. With the Wi-Fi signal, responders at the site can access the internet and make and receive cell calls, Cropley said.

Unload the backpack, set up the antenna, plug in the router and feed it with 110-volt power “and you’ve got internet,” he explained.

Rhonda Butler, emergency operations specialist with Tlingit and Haida in Juneau, delivered two units to Wrangell. “I was able to set up Starlink both on the north side, the town side of the slide, and over on the south side” to help with search operations and mapping systems.

The area around 11-Mile Zimovia Highway is outside the range of cell towers in Wrangell.

“Communication is crucial to emergency management. The State Emergency Operation Center appreciates the Tlingit and Haida Starlink units that have increased that ability of responders and residents to communicate,” Jeremy Zidek, public information officer for the state Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, said Friday.

“When tribal entities, faith-based and volunteer organizations, and state and federal agencies pull together to support local emergency response efforts, it makes a tremendous difference to the people that have been impacted by a disaster,” Zidek said.

The Starlink service has a limited range, about the area of a large house, Cropley said, so the Wi-Fi generally is only for responders and other to use at the command posts.

A direct line of sight to the low-orbit Starlink satellites is required for the service to work, he said. “A year ago, we had zero satellites in Southeast.” But as the company has launched more satellites into orbit, the coverage now extends throughout Southeast.

SpaceX rockets started launching Starlink satellites in 2019. As of last month, the company said it had more than 5,000 of its small satellites in orbit around the planet.

“That clear view of the sky is important,” Cropley said of a setup site.

Starlink promotes itself as “the world’s first and largest satellite constellation using a low-Earth orbit to deliver broadband internet capable of supporting streaming, online gaming, video calls and more.”

Tlingit and Haida has in the past deployed the backpack units in Kake and Pelican.

The Starlink equipment costs less than \$1,000, Cropley said, with a monthly subscription fee of \$150.

The temporary service at the landslide site is separate from Tlingit and Haida’s ongoing Tidal Network effort, which will include at least two tower sites in Wrangell to serve areas out the road and on the north end of the island and toward the Stikine River flats that lack good cell coverage.

The network’s goal is to bring reliable, high-speed internet to unserved and underserved areas in Southeast.

A couple of the self-contained tower installations arrived in town earlier year, and Tlingit and Haida is working with the borough and a private cell tower operator at Shoemaker Bay for permits and permissions, while it also moves through the environmental review process for its new installations, Cropley said.

Tidal Network is using federal grant funds, which require environmental reviews of the sites, he explained.

The new wireless internet and cell service for the community could be in operation by summer, he said. Rates and signup information will be available later.

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Emergency Warning - Wail Tone This will be a 3-5 minute wavering (warbling in pitch) tone or siren. The “Emergency Warning” signal should mean to all people that a danger is imminent and protective action (Evacuate, go to high ground or take shelter, depending on the emergency) should be taken immediately. Turn on your radio and listen for essential emergency information, keep telephone use limited to emergency contact, do not call 911 to ask about the sirens. The “Emergency Warning” signal shall be repeated as often as deemed necessary by local government authorities to obtain the desired response by the population.

Attention/Alert - Steady Tone A 3 – 5 minute steady signal from sirens. This signal may be used as authorized by city officials to alert the public to potential emergencies, where the public may face danger in the near future, such as under a Tsunami or Earthquake Advisory, in addition to any other meaning or requirement for action as determined by Borough officials. The Attention/Alert Signal should mean to all people, “Turn on radio or TV, keep telephone use limited to emergency contact only. Listen for essential emergency information, Be prepared to act.”

Local Fire Alert - Wail Tone This will be a 30 second wavering (warbling in pitch) tone or siren. The Local Fire Alert is only to be used in cases of major fire, where multiple structures are endangered, Initial responders are over-whelmed and additional help is needed from reserve units, or abnormal events such as a plane crash or other accidents that require many more responders. The “Local Fire Alert” signal should mean to all people that an active Fire response is ongoing, affected areas should be avoided and routes leading to the scene should remain clear. Turn on your radio and listen for additional information, do not call 911 to ask about the sirens. The “Local Fire Alert” signal shall be repeated as often as deemed necessary by local government authorities.



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Artist Suzanne Fuqua featured in first-ever solo show

By **ORIN PIERSON**
Pilot editor

After helping her friend Kerry Kirkpatrick set up a solo exhibition at Juneau Douglas City Museum last year, Suzanne Fuqua realized the time has arrived to introduce herself to her community as an artist.

Clausen Memorial Museum will host Fuqua's first ever solo exhibition from Dec. 1 through Dec. 14. The art show titled "Before, After, and In Between" will showcase a collection of around 50 paintings in a range of styles and mediums produced by Fuqua over the past five years. There will be sketchbooks, as well, for a glimpse of her creative process.

Fuqua credits Kirkpatrick and Petersburg artist Pia Reilly as being the catalysts for her art.

"I did a watercolor class with Pia. We're talking decades ago," Fuqua told the Pilot. "Then in 1998 Pia had that gallery and I had paintings there ... little watercolors ... and I helped Pia once a week in the gallery."

Though she was making art and living an artistic, expressive life while raising her two daughters, "I still didn't think of myself

as an artist," she said.

Two decades flew by without Fuqua doing much painting, but in 2018, Reilly was commissioned to repaint downtown Petersburg's 40-foot Our Town Mural, originally designed in 2003 by Polly Lee. Reilly asked Fuqua to help spearhead the mural project, which reportedly took several months to complete.

A fair amount of the mural's polyurethane porch and floor paint remained leftover, which Fuqua inherited and started using to making artworks of her own on outdoor-grade MDO plywood. These durable paintings are suitable to hang on a porch or under an eave, and 13 of these works will be included in the exhibition; one such painting — a kingfisher on driftwood — is mounted nicely under an eave near Fuqua's own front door.

During an extended stay in Arizona a few years ago with her daughter Jane, a new series of artworks began to take shape. Fuqua calls it her "Dream Series," and they are smaller, mostly charcoal and oil pastel pieces that are more abstract than much of her other work.

Ten of these dream works will be included in the exhibition.

The show is rounded out by several of Fuqua's pieces on loan from private collections in town, and several pieces created for community art shows. "The Pride art shows at the Clausen Museum ... those always sparked as a catalyst, and Five Finger Lighthouse to help with the fundraising."

For Fuqua, who worked many years in Petersburg in the nonprofit and fundraising world, contributing artwork to local community fundraisers has become a meaningful way to participate in good causes.

"I love participating!" she says.

Reflecting on her art career, Fuqua describes herself as "a late bloomer."

It was only in the last few years that she has come to recognize herself not as a person who enjoys artistic pursuits but as, in fact, an artist.

"Now if someone says, 'What do you do?' I say, 'I'm an artist ... I'm a practicing artist.'"

"I finally figured it out. I'm so glad I lived to be 70. I thought, you know what, I gotta have my first solo show when I'm 70. You



ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

Petersburg Artist Suzanne Fuqua stands alongside a recently completed painting titled Where the North Wind Meets the Sea. There will be a reception for Fuqua's solo exhibition this Friday at Clausen Memorial Museum from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

know? Not let any more time go by."

And getting everything ready for this show is lighting a fire for even more art-making.

"Sharing it is definitely a motivator," she said.

"I already have ideas for next shows that won't be anything like this. I can't wait to get painting more."

For Fuqua, painting is full of discovery. "I put color down and then just look at it and see something in the shades and the hues and all I do is follow that one element ... one thing shows up and then suddenly because of that ... something else shows up and something else ... It's fun!"

The act of painting, for Fuqua, and getting totally im-

mersed, "letting time melt away ... creating from your mind," is a way of exploring new frontiers.

"Am I going to go climbing up Mount Everest? No. And surfing? Okay, no, I'm not," she said. But her journey as an artist contains "a universe" yet to explore.

Fuqua's solo exhibition will be on display in the Clausen Memorial Museum from this Friday, Dec. 1 through Dec. 14, with a reception Dec. 1.

Art enthusiasts will have the opportunity to take in another art show in downtown Petersburg Friday — an artist's reception for Joe Viechnicki will take place Friday evening at Firelight Gallery and Framing.

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250-300 HP	Free! \$2,700 value	425-450 HP	Free! \$7,000 value
200-225 HP	Free! \$2,250 value		
150-175 HP	Free! \$1,500 value		
115 HP	Free! \$990 value		
60-90 HP	Free! \$800 value		
30-50 HP	Free! \$550 value		

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DEALER CREDIT TOWARD PURCHASE OF GOODS/SERVICES	
Eligible Outboards Only	Dealer Credit
20-25 HP	\$300 based on MSRP
9.9-15 HP	\$250 based on MSRP
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MITKOF DANCE TROUPE PRESENTS

THE Nutcracker

Saturday, December 9th: 6:30 pm
cookie reception to follow

Sunday, December 10th: 2:30pm

WRIGHT AUDITORIUM
Doors open 30 minutes prior to showtime

Tickets available at Lee's Clothing - \$15 each

VSC sister duo make a splash competing in Arizona

By **LIAM DEMKO**
Pilot writer

Petersburg swimmers Tori and Bella Miller traveled down to the lower 48 earlier this month to compete against some of the best in the country at US Swimming Interval Medley Xtreme (IMX) in Mesa Arizona. Amongst a group of six Alaskan swimmers, the Miller duo competed against kids from Southwest, Pacific Northwest, and Midwest states, coming out of the competition with several impressive performances in various events.

IMX is a yearly event that hosts young swimmers and helps them ease into a future in competitive swimming. "It prepares kids for mid to long distance swimming events and prepares them for collegiate events, when they go on to college and swim or for long course events, for Olympic trials, or international events," said Jason Miller, Tori and Bella's father. This event was the girls' first time competing out of state and their first time racing in an outdoor pool, but they adapted quickly and flourished in the new environment.

Tori Miller—11 years old—competed in the 11-12 age group, where she placed second in the 100 Fly, fourth in the 200 IM, sixth in the 100 Breaststroke, ninth in the 500 Free, and 16th in the 100 Backstroke. Out of more than 100 swimmers from across the western United States, she placed seventh overall in her age group. At 13 years old, Bella Miller competed in the 13-18 age group, placing fifth in the 200 Breaststroke, sixth in the 200 Backstroke, ninth in both the 200 IM and 500 Free, 10th in the 400 IM, and 18th in the 200 Fly, landing her in ninth place overall for her age group.

"Bella thrived in this environment, she really enjoyed the competition," said Jason Miller. "For her 40 IM she cut off 18 seconds off [her time] from the week before... She had a really good meet individually and she was really proud of herself... It was amazing to watch her thrive because she's super young in her age group." Jason Miller made sure to shine a light on the hard work of his daughters as well as the achievements and efforts of the Viking Swim Club swimmers and staff. "I'm really proud of them and they work really hard at it... It's fun to see how these girls are doing and we're lucky enough to have a swim program that supports these efforts."



Alaskan Swimmers from Petersburg, Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Sitka traveled down to Mesa Arizona as a group to compete at IMX earlier this month. Left to Right: Masey Muffaletto, Julianna Cellaire, Victoria Miller, Jemma Sherwood, Tricia Wu, Olivia Jarvill, Isabella Miller



at Petersburg School District

Monday, Dec 4
Tangerine Chicken
Tuesday, Dec 5
Corn Shell Tacos
Wednesday, Dec 6
Baked Potato Bar
Thursday, Dec 7
Viking Ramen Bowl
Friday, Dec 8
WG Sub Sandwich



BREAKFAST MENU -
Served With Milk & Choice of:
Fresh Fruit, Applesauce or
Dried Cranberries
Homemade Granola with Yogurt,
Smoothie and Granola, Fruit
Parfait and Granola, French
Toast, Oatmeal, Homemade
Muffin, and Cereals
Don't like Lunch Menu?
Try the Salad Bar
All Breakfast and Lunch Meals
Served with Milk
*WG = Whole Grain



petersburg
pilot
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December 2023
6th (Wed) :
6-8pm @ PVFD
OR
16th (Sat) :
2-4pm @ Library



Artifact Archive

This fur seal parka was custom made by Nome Alaska Skin Sewers for Treg Claypool when she lived in Mountain Village, Alaska, in the early forty. The parka is trimmed with black and white fur, possibly wolf. The is a diamond design around the hood, cuffs and bottom appear to be made out of seal hide.

Information and photos for this column are provided by the Clausen Memorial Museum.



OLIVIA ROSE / Petersburg Pilot

A moment of silence

A parade of Petersburg community members gather outside of the municipal building for the annual tree lighting ceremony. The gathering held up candles in a moment of silence for neighbors to the south in Wrangell on Nov. 24 after a landslide took a devastating toll in Wrangell a few days prior.

Senior Meals

MONDAY, December 4

Rock Fish Burger with Lettuce and Tomato, Tater Tots,
Yogurt with Fruit, Chocolate Cake

TUESDAY, December 5

Enchiladas, Rice and Beans, Green
Salad, Apple Pie Bread

WEDNESDAY, December 6

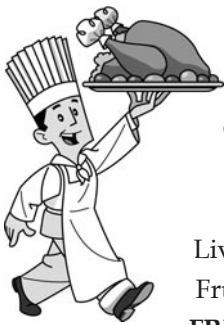
Chili, Corn Bread, Green Salad,
Juice, Brownie

THURSDAY, December 7

Liver and Onions, Mashed Potatoes,
Fruit Cup, Salad, Chocolate Mousse

FRIDAY, December 8

Hot Turkey Sandwich, Mashed Potatoes,
Mixed Vegetables, Cottage Cheese with Fruit, Muffin



The community dining room is open to eligible diners (60+ and their spouses, or disabled individuals living in an assisted living facility). Dinner is served between 4 and 4:30 p.m. All meals are suggested donation only. Please call Mountain View Food Service at 772-4331 before noon for reservations.

BIRTHDAYS
& ANNIVERSARIES

The Pilot extends its best wishes to the persons listed on the Community Calendar.

Those with birthdays this week are: **December 1:** Mandy Whitethorne, Nicole Hallingstad. **December 2:** Doug Riemer, Thomas Zorich. **December 3:** Cherie Martens, Matthew Gudgel, Max Peeler, Zac Peeler. **December 4:** Krista Birchell, Amber Beardslee, Cena Worhatch, Kolleen Jennings. **December 6:** Julia Murph.

Those with anniversaries this week are: **December 1:** Dave and Tanya Thynes. **December 6:** Rick and Teresa Versteeg. **December 7:** Ralph and Tammy Strickland.

If you'd like to be included on our list, please call 907-772-9393.

Public Notices
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NOTICE OF EXPIRATION OF
REDEMPTION PERIOD

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, pursuant to Alaska Statute 29.45.440 and Section 4.24.440 of the Petersburg Municipal Code, that the redemption period for the properties listed in Exhibit "1" of the Judgment and Decree entered on December 7, 2022 by the Superior Court for the State of Alaska, First Judicial District at Petersburg (Case No. 1PE-22-37 Civil), foreclosing on real property against which taxes are delinquent for the year 2021, will expire on December 26, 2023. A copy of the Judgment and Decree is available for inspection at the Borough Finance Department, 12 South Nordic Drive, Petersburg, Alaska 99833.

Properties listed in Exhibit "1" of the Judgment and Decree, unless redeemed, shall be deeded to the Petersburg Borough immediately upon expiration of the period of redemption and every right or interest of a person in said properties will be forfeited forever to the Borough, subject to certain repurchase rights of the owner of record set out in Alaska Statute 29.45.470/Petersburg Municipal Code 4.24.465.

Published: November 23, 30, December 7 and 14, 2023

Jody A. Tow
Jody Tow, Finance Director
Petersburg Borough

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ATTENTION INTERESTED PARTIES

SSRAA – Nominations for Appointed Seats

Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association, Inc. Board of Directors is soliciting nominations for the following appointed positions:

Chamber of Commerce
Native Corporation
Municipal
Processor
Public at Large (2 Seats)
Sport Fish
Subsistence



These are two year terms beginning in January 2024. Nominations must be in writing and submitted to SSRAA, 14 Borch Street, Ketchikan, AK 99901 by December 1, 2023.

Nomination forms are available on our website www.ssraa.org
For further information call (907) 225-9605 or email summerp@ssraa.org

Christmas Tree
CUTTING

You do not need a permit to cut a Christmas tree on the Petersburg Ranger District for personal use. Christmas tree cutting for personal use is not intended to sell for commercial use.

There are no regulations on what tree species to cut or size to cut. However, there are a few rules to follow:

- Do not top a larger tree
- Do not cut a tree and then discard it for another one you may find more desirable, and
- Cut trees as close to the ground as possible, below the lowest limb or 12 inches from the ground.

For more information please contact the Petersburg Ranger District at (907) 772-3871.

The USDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.



Forest Service
Alaska Region
Tongass National
Forest



United States Department of Agriculture

Published: November 23 and 30, December 7, 2023

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Early Voting Days

Monday, December 4, 2023,
from 8 AM - 11 AM

Tuesday, December 12, 2023,
from 11 AM - 2 PM

Wednesday, December 20, 2023,
from 2 PM - 4:30 PM

Thursday, December 28, 2023,
from 4:30 PM - 6:30 PM

Eligible PIA voters can come to the PIA Conference Room located at 15 N. 12th St to cast their early vote for their 2024 Tribal Council.

Election Day is
Monday, January 8, 2024
from 8am until 7pm.



Published: November 23, 30, December 7, 14, 21 and 28, 2023

Notice to Write-In Candidates

There shall be an election of the Petersburg Indian Association Tribal Council on January 8, 2024. The polling location will be PIA's Conference Room. The voting polls will open at 8 AM and will close at 7 PM on Election Day.

The following seats will be up for election:

Council Chair (President):	1 seat - One-Year Term
Council Member:	3 seats - Two-Year Term
Council Member:	1 seat - One-Year Term

Eligible members wishing to run but having missed the deadline to be on the official ballot may still submit a "Letter of Intent to Run as a Write-In." You can obtain this form from the PIA front desk or website. All Letters of Intent to Run as a Write-In must be received by November 30, 2023, by 4 PM to be added to the list of eligible candidates.

A full list of eligible write-ins will be posted online and at the polls on Election Day.

For more information on how to run, where to get forms, eligibility requirements, absentee voting, or registering as a member of PIA, please contact Rebecca Lee at 907-772-3636 or email piaelection@piatribal.org.

Published: November 02, 09, 16, 23, and 30, 2023

PROPERTY

Stikine River Property Konig Slough 6+ acres 220 ft river frontage \$80,000. 8-acre lot off river easy access \$60,000. Will finance. 907-518-0101

.....tfn5-4b22

JOB

Immediate opening for front house customer service. \$15 hour plus tips. Contact Mindy at (907) 518-0571 or stop in the Salty Pantry.

.....tfn11-30b22

Petersburg Borough has an opening for a permanent full-time Motor Pool Equipment Mechanic. Starting wage for this position is \$32.42/hour. \$2500 hiring bonus after six-month probation period and \$2500 bonus after one year. Three years of vehicle repair and maintenance employment experience is required. Possession of a Class A or B Commercial Driver's License with air brake and



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tanker endorsements is preferred; however, applicants with the ability to obtain the required CDL within the first six months of employment will be considered. A full job description and employment application can be obtained below. Applications will be accepted at the front desk of the Borough office, 12 S. Nordic Drive, or mailed to P.O. Box 329, Petersburg, AK

99833, attn: Human Resources, until the position is filled.

.....tfn11-30b7129

FOR SALE Power Troll Permit - \$27,500

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.....tfn11-16b74

Mountain View Manor is hiring

Public Notices

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INVITATION TO BID

Notice is hereby given that the Petersburg Indian Association will receive sealed bids for the CITY CREEK TRAIL RECONSTRUCTION ~ PHASE II. The project generally consists rebuilding of 3,111' of existing trail with gravel to a new width of 8'. In addition 1,789' of elevated wooden boardwalk on steel pipe pile will be built along the 19' - 20' elevation tideline for improved viewing - replacing the same amount existing trail that will be abandoned. Two new 8' wide gravel trails will be built from Frederick Point Road down to the main trail. These trail lengths are approximately 447' and 637'.

The estimated construction cost for the base bid is between \$500,000 & \$1,000,000. All Work must be completed by December 31, 2024.

Sealed bids will be received by the Petersburg Indian Association, by US mail at Post Office Box 1410, Petersburg, Alaska 99833, OR hand delivered upstairs at the Elizabeth Peratrovich Building, 15 North 12th Street, Petersburg, Alaska, (Telephone 907-772-3636) until 2:00 p.m. prevailing time on Friday, January 5, 2024, at which time the bids will be publicly opened and read aloud in the Elizabeth Peratrovich Conference Room.

The Contract Documents may be obtained from the Petersburg Indian Association Office, located at 15 North 12th Street, Petersburg, Alaska (Telephone 907-772-3636), Petersburg, Alaska 99833, or viewed online at piatribal.org. A non-refundable fee of \$30.00 made payable to the PETERSBURG INDIAN ASSOCIATION is required for each set of contract documents. Additional charges will be required for special handling or delivery of the documents by means other than first-class mail. The Contract Documents may also be downloaded free of charge on the PETERSBURG INDIAN ASSOCIATION website (piatribal.org). Prospective bidders documents are required to sign the project bidders list to receive changes or addenda. All changes or addenda will be listed on the website. It is the Offeror's responsibility to ensure that they have received all Addenda affecting this Solicitation.

Petersburg Standard Specifications (CPSS) that will be used in this contract are available for an additional fee of \$60.00 made payable to the Petersburg Borough or available for free on the Borough's website www.petersburgak.gov. Additional charges will be required for special handling or delivery of the documents by means other than first-class mail. Petersburg Standard Specifications documents may also be obtained at the Petersburg Borough Public Works office.

Prospective bidders are encouraged to attend a Pre-Bid Conference that will be held in Petersburg at Elizabeth Peratrovich Building, 15 North 12th Street, Petersburg, Alaska, on Thursday, December 14, 2023, at 2:00 PM in the PIA conference room. Attendance by teleconference will be available by calling 1-907-772-3636. Technical questions regarding this project may be directed to the Tribal Transportation Director, Susan Harai, (907) 772-3636. She is located at the Petersburg Indian Association Office, located at 15 North 12th Street, Petersburg, Alaska.

Each bid shall be accompanied by a bid bond, cashier's check, or certified check made payable to the PETERSBURG INDIAN ASSOCIATION in the amount of five percent of the total bid price.

The PETERSBURG INDIAN ASSOCIATION reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in a bid, and to make an award to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder as it may best serve the interest of the Petersburg Indian Association.



Authorized by:
Chad Wright, Tribal Administrator

Published: November 30, December 7, 14, 21, 28, 2023 and January 4, 2024

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.....tfn11-02b144

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907-424-2535 Office
907-424-2536 Direct

The Petersburg Borough, Alaska Electric Department has an opening for the position of Electrician/Operator. This is a full-time position, with a starting wage of \$60.42 for PERS Tier 1-3 employees or \$58.00 for PERS Tier 4, and full benefits. The Borough will consider applications from State of Alaska certified Journeyman or Master level electricians, or Electricians that can obtain a State of Alaska Journeyman Electrician Certificate of Fitness within six months of employment. The Petersburg Borough will assist in obtaining this certificate. Signing bonus of \$5,000 after completion of six-month probationary period. Up to

Bearing Song and Gifts



907-978-6365
Musical Equipment & Lessons

\$15,000 reimbursable relocation expenses with a minimum two (2) year employment agreement. A complete job description and employment application can be obtained from the Borough's website at www.petersburgak.gov. Applications for the position will be accepted until the position is filled. Send completed applications to the Borough HR office, PO Box 329, Petersburg, AK 99833, fax to 907-772-3759, or email to bregula@petersburgak.gov.

.....tfn11-16b155

First Bank is looking for a Customer Service Representative/Teller for the Petersburg Branch. If you like to work with customers, enjoy problem solving, are dependable, and you are interested in the position, stop by the branch and let's talk about it. Previous experience is not required. Application can be found online at www.First-BankAK.com or at the branch. We offer competitive salaries, health insurance, paid holidays, vacation, 401 (k) retirement plans, employees stock ownership plans and educational opportunities.

.....tfn9-28b77

Petersburg Borough has an opening for the position of Journeyman Lineman. This is a regular full-time position in which the Lineman will also be trained as a generation operator. Wage \$59.75/hr with operator premium (Tier 4) \$62.17/hr with operator premium (Tier 1-3) Signing bonus of \$5,000 after completion of six-month probationary period. Up to \$15,000 reimbursable relocation expenses with a minimum two (2) year employment agreement. A complete job description and employment application can be obtained from the Borough's website at www.petersburgak.gov. Applications will be accepted at the front desk of the Borough office at 12 S. Nordic Street in Petersburg; by mail to Human Resources, P.O. Box 329, Petersburg, AK 99833; or via email to bregula@petersburgak.gov.

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gag.gov. Open until position is filled.

.....tfn11-16b124

Petersburg Borough has an opening for a permanent full-time Motor Pool Equipment Mechanic. Starting wage for this position is \$29.42/hour. Three years of vehicle repair and maintenance employment experience is required. Possession of a Class A or B Commercial Driver's License with air brake and tanker endorsements is preferred; however, applicants with the ability to obtain the required CDL within the first six months of employment will be considered. A full job description and employment application can be obtained from the Borough's website at www.petersburgak.gov. Applications will be accepted at the front desk of the Borough office, 12 S. Nordic Drive, or mailed to P.O. Box 329, Petersburg, AK 99833, attn: Human Resources, until position is filled.

.....tfn7-13b117

Job opening for a full-time bakery-deli front house manager as well as full and part time prep cook and baker. Inquire with Mindy at the Salty Pantry or call 907-772-2665.

.....tfn4-13b30

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.....1x11-30dh

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NOTICES

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For complete job descriptions or any questions, contact Human Resources Director Cindy Newman at cnewman@pmc-health.org or call **907-772-5719**

Support for Wrangell

Continued from page 1
were filled with food, water, blankets, clothing and other essentials.

Written in marker and signed with a heart on the top of one of the totes was a message from Petersburg: "Sent with love from our house to yours — we hope this helps keep your next few weeks and months cozy."

"It's times like this that really make you feel like you're a part of a bigger family," Camie Gillen told the Pilot. "It was so incredible to see how many different communities all over Southeast are rallying together in different ways to help them. And it's just an honor to be a part of that. And to be honest, I just wish there was more that we could do."

Gillen co-organized the effort with Britni Birchell, owner of Common Grounds coffee shops in Petersburg, together "with so many others that helped."

Like many members in the Petersburg community, they both have friends and family in Wrangell, "And so it was just really important that we do something to help in a time when we all felt so helpless. We just felt like it was the only thing we could try to do, and we just wish there was more [we could do to help]."

Wrangell communicated with them what specific supplies were needed, and Petersburg quickly coordinated an "overwhelming" donation effort.

Community members throughout town contributed clothing of all kinds and sizes, blankets, shelf-stable goods and pet food, toiletries and daily essentials; the donations filled both coffee shop locations.

Petersburg nonprofit Humanity In Progress lent aid in sorting, organizing and preparing the donated materials for Wrangell and offered space to store leftover supplies. The various support items were sorted and put in different totes with labels, first at the downtown Petersburg location of Common Grounds and then at the drive-thru location.

"People had donated so much that it was hard to walk in the back room of that drive-thru," Gillen recalled. "We didn't know how much the boat could take over."

Volunteers filled up a U-Haul donated from Petersburg

Motors, which moved the supplies from downtown to Banana Point on Wednesday the 22.

An assembly line crew of people from town formed from the truck to the tide to help load the boat.

"We were out there for quite a while, but ... everybody was pitching in. So once we got going, it wasn't too bad."

Breakaway Adventures shipped two boats worth of supplies to Wrangell, where people in Wrangell donated their time to unload and bring to the community center.

Jake Jabusch, who volunteered to help offload the donations in Wrangell, said such generosity and solidarity in the midst of a crisis is normal for communities like Wrangell and Petersburg. "It seems like it's always been that way," he told the Sentinel.

Rhonda Butler grew up in Wrangell and is based in Juneau as the emergency operations specialist with the Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska. With her family ties in town, she felt particularly motivated to help out.

"When I got the call, of course they had to check to make sure that I was going to be capable of responding. And I said, 'If you didn't ask me, I would've told you I was going, regardless if I was working or not,'" she said. "I know my hometown needs."

Tammi Meissner, Wrangell's community navigator with Tlingit and Haida, said that she and Jillian Privett formed the Wrangell Strong Community Relief Group Facebook page to help coordinate relief efforts into one hub.

Posts on the community relief page and the regular community Facebook page have requested that all social media posts related to the landslide include the hashtag #WrangellStrong to reach more viewers.

Meissner shared that there is a list of residents able to house evacuees, and anyone who would like to be added to the list can contact her via Facebook or by texting 907-518-1418.

On the community relief Facebook page, Mike Nicholas from Ohio posted greetings and thanks to Wrangell residents, identifying himself as the brother of Christina Florschutz, who survived the

slide. Her husband, Otto Florschutz, was still missing as of Monday.

"I would like to thank the entire community of Wrangell for all the help and support you have provided to my sister and her family as well as others in need there," he said. "You have an amazing community."

Cell and wifi coverage

Butler told the Sentinel that Charlie Hazel opened his private dock at 12.7-Mile, past the area blocked by the landslide, to provide boat access for search and rescue workers, police and fuel deliveries, and the water taxis ferrying displaced residents.

Butler used that access to set up a Starlink system she brought to help restore cell service and internet at the south side of the 11-Mile landslide for first responders and state, federal and local officials.

The portable satellite link has limited range, not much beyond the central command post, but residents who are stuck out the road could access the signal if they get close enough to the setup. According to the community relief Facebook page, the Wi-Fi name is TlingitHaida and the password is Wrangellstrong.

Fundraising underway

Several fundraisers have been started to provide aid to people affected by last week's landslide.

Meissner said the community relief Facebook page highlights various drives that are underway, including the 11-Mile Emergency Relief Fund,

an account she opened at City Market and IGA, which will be used for food and paper products needed by those affected by the slide.

Aside from food, clothing and warm beds, Meissner said money donations for families, fuel and other provisions is another way people can donate support.

First Bank has two accounts set up for monetary donations: one for search and rescue supplies and other assistance; the second for families affected by the landslide.

Cash donations can be made at any First Bank branch location in Southeast. Those farther away, and wanting to donate by credit or debit card, can call the bank at 1-888-220-4446 or 1-888-540-8585.

A GoFundMe account has been created to accept donations under the name Wrangell 11 Mile Emergency Relief. It had raised more than \$32,000 as of Sunday.

"We've got a lot of [airline] mileage being donated," Meissner told the Sentinel. "We're working with Alaska Airlines at this time to figure

out if they can waive the fee of transferring miles. ... So we're kind of on hold for that right now."

The Wrangell Borough's Facebook page said that Wrangell Parks and Recreation is accepting food donations for people affected by the slide. Donations can be dropped off at the community center kitchen, and contributors can put items in the refrigerator or on the counter.

Creators of "Wrangell Strong" clothing items are donating a portion of the proceeds to relief efforts.

Made in Wrangell studio owner Marina Backman designed a T-shirt with the words "Wrangell Strong" bracketing a patch of starry sky with the northern lights.

"I made it yesterday," she said at the Thanksgiving Day community dinner.

Nicole Hammer created and is selling T-shirts and sweatshirts with a #WrangellStrong on the front with proceeds going to families personally affected by the landslide. She had sold 100 sweatshirts as of last Saturday.



Good Beginnings 2023-2024 Enrollment Inquiry

Interested in enrolling your child in the
2023-2024 preschool year?
ENROLLMENT IS OPEN!

Scan the QR code below and fill out the form.
You will be contacted with the next steps.
Scholarships are available!



SCAN ME:



Wellness, Education and Resource Center (WERC)

Petersburg Medical Center invites you to our

Ground Breaking CEREMONY

Join us for the ceremonial groundbreaking of the WERC building, an exciting milestone in the future of Petersburg's healthcare.

**FRIDAY**
DECEMBER 8TH

**TIME**
12:00 PM - 12:15 PM

**PMC NEW FACILITY SITE**
HAUGEN DRIVE NEAR 8TH ST.

The Borough is hosting light refreshments in the Assembly Chambers following the ceremony. Please join us!

**PLEASE BE CAUTIOUS OF UNEVEN GROUND

FBC Petersburg

Sunday: 9:45a - Bible Classes • **10:45a** - Fellowship/Meet & Greet
• **11a** - Worship in person & Facebook • **6p** - Youth Group

Wednesday: 6p - Outreach Fellowship Meal
• **7p** - LIFE Group in Fellowship Hall

Thursday: 6p - Celebrate Recovery



772-4563 • Corner of 5th & Gjoa Streets
Please continue to check our Facebook page and website for updates at
First Baptist Church Petersburg www.fbcpetersburg.com

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